

BOAT STEERING WHEEL WITH FINGER GRIP INDENTATIONS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A formed stainless steel steering wheel is produced by a process that includes starting with a linear stock of round tubing which is then formed into a generally circular shape with an oval-shaped cross-section. The two ends of the curved tubing are then welded together to form a circular blank. The blank is then placed into a circular die having forming punches associated therewith to strike the blank to form finger grip indentations therein. The circular die is then rotationally indexed so that the forming punches can form subsequent finger grip indentations around the circumference of the blank adjacent to the previously formed indentations in a predetermined pattern until the steering wheel rim is completed. By utilizing multiple, preferably three, forming punches equidistantly spaced along the circumference of the circular die, the finger grip indentations can be formed without crushing the blank. A preselected number of radially extending spokes are then welded between the formed rim and a central hub to complete the formation of the stainless steel steering wheel having a particular use on boats operated on salt water.